

Message Text

SECRET

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41

ACTION EA-06

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 PM-03 MC-01 L-01 INR-05 CIAE-00

DODE-00 NSCE-00 NSC-05 IGA-01 RSC-01 /038 W

----- 112766

R 191107Z DEC 74

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9237

INFO AMEMBASSY RANGOON

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY SEOUL

S E C R E T BANGKOK 19780

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILI, TH

SUBJECT: PROPOSED COS SALE OF 25,000 M-16 RIFLES TO THAILAND

REF: (A) STATE 265352 (NOTAL)

(B) SEOUL 8259 (NOTAL)

1. ON DECEMBER 18, SENIOR THAI POLICE OFFICIAL RAISED WITH DCM NEED FOR M-16'S FOR THAI BORDER AND PROVINCIAL POLICE AND REITERATED THAI HOPE THAT NECESSARY APPROVAL TO PURCHASE THESE FROM SINGAPORE WOULD BE FORTHCOMING SOON. THAI OFFICIAL SAID THAT, IN ADDITION TO URGENT NEED FOR WEAPONS, DIRECTOR GENERAL OF POLICE WANTS TO GO AHEAD WITH PROCUREMENT FROM SINGAPORE SINCE THIS IS A "CLEAN" TRANSACTION (NO BUILD-IN RAKEOFFS), PRICE IS GOOD AND DELIVERY CAN BE EFFECTED QUICKLY AND CHEAPLY. DCM PROMISED TO LOOK INTO THE MATTER.

2. WE HOPE APPROVAL FOR PROCUREMENT OF M-16'S FROM SINGAPORE CAN BE WORKED OUT. FROM THAI STANDPOINT, THIS WOULD BE LOGICAL SOURCE OF SUPPLY. IF DIFFICULTIES EMERGING BETWEEN COLT AND GOS (AND OTHERS ANTICIPATED FROM CONGRESS AND US UNIONS) REGARDING PROPOSED SALE BY GOS TO ROYAL THAI NATIONAL POLICE ARE INSURMOUNTABLE, WE SUGGEST THAT ROK BE CONSIDERED AS

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ALTERNATE SOURCE OF M-16'S, ASSUMING, OF COURSE, THIS WOULD

BE ACCEPTABLE TO RTG.

3. IN TERMS USG INTERESTS, PURCHASE OF THIS MAGNITUDE FROM ROK BY RTG MIGHT HELP PAVE WAY FOR COOPERATIVE MILITARY PRODUCTION ARRANGEMENTS IN WHICH WE ARE INTERESTED (REF B). IF ACCEPTABLE TO COLT, RTG PURCHASE FROM ROK, PARTICULARLY IF LINKED WITH SUBSEQUENT SEPARATE CO-PRODUCTION PROJECT IN THAILAND, MIGHT ALSO PROVE ACCEPTABLE TO CONGRESS AND TO UNIONS ON BASIS THAT IT WOULD BE PART OF PROGRAM TO INCREASE MILITARY SELF-SUFFICIENCY OF TWO MAP RECIPIENT COUNTRIES, OBJECTIVE BEING TO CONTRIBUTE TO US SECURITY ABROAD WHILE AT SAME TIME REDUCING NEED FOR FURTHER GRANT ASSISTANCE BY USG.

4. WE DEFER TO EMBASSY SINGAPORE, OF COURSE, IN ASSESSING POSSIBLE GOS REACTIONS TO A SWITCH TO ROK AS SOURCE OF M-16'S FOR THAI POLICE.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: SMALL ARMS, MILITARY SALES, MUNITIONS CONTROLS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 19 DEC 1974
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ElyME
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974BANGKO19780
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740369-0534
From: BANGKOK
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19741224/aaaaatux.tel
Line Count: 78
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Reference: 74 STATE 265352
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ElyME
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 10 JUL 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <10 JUL 2002 by shawdg>; APPROVED <26 MAR 2003 by ElyME>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PROPOSED COS SALE OF 25,000 M-16 RIFLES TO THAILAND
TAGS: MILI, TH, COLT INDUSTRIES
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005